

REMARKS

The applicant has carefully considered the Office action dated July 14, 2004. By way of this Response, claims 1-5 have been cancelled without prejudice to their further prosecution. In view of the following, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims are in condition for allowance and favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

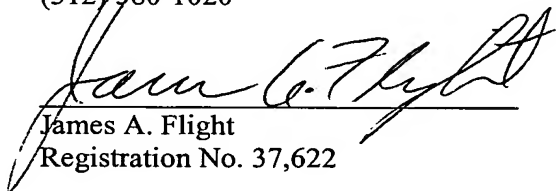
The Office action identifies two inventions in the claim set, namely, the invention of claims 1-5 (Group I), and the invention of claims 6-15 (Group II)¹. Applicant hereby elects Group II (i.e., claims 6-15) for further prosecution in this case without traverse. Accordingly, claims 1-5 have been cancelled and may be pursued in one or more divisional applications.

If the Examiner is of the opinion that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number identified below.

Respectfully submitted,

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¹ The Office action erroneously excludes independent claim 6 from both identified inventive Groups. In reviewing the claims, it is clear that this oversight was a typographical error, and that claim 6 is part of Group II. Therefore, the applicant has prepared this response under the assumption that Group II includes claims 6-15.